

deftones: WORTH TO WAIT

MTV MUSIC FEATURE
JANUARY 2000TO BE A FAN OF THE DEFTONES
IS TO BE INTIMATE WITH LONGING.

After sending a jolt through the hard rock world with its 1995 debut "*Adrenaline*", two long years passed before the band returned with 1997's "*Around The Fur*". The album helped the group find its first significant mainstream radio play, but fans would have to wait three more years before the Deftones would begin to build on that success.

But if the band's fans have gotten used to waiting, the Deftones themselves have it down to a science. After "*Adrenaline*" found the group a national following, industry observers predicted the band would follow the same path that Korn had paved from Cali to the top of the charts. While "*Around The Fur*" was met by strong sales (debuting in the top 30 of the album chart), it failed to meet the "next big thing" expectations that some in the industry had slapped on it. Now, as the Deftones prepare to deliver "*The White Pony*" into a musical landscape where theirwhere their old friends Korn and Limp Bizkit reside near the top of the heap, expectations are again high.

The band is keenly aware of what people expect from them this time around, but the pressure from the outside is nothing compared to the pressure from within the band. The Deftones' high standards seem to be the main reason for the three-year gestation period of "*The White Pony*", and the band notes that the tension had them "about to go at it."

In an interview with *MTV News*, the band talked about that tension, about what drove frontman Chino Moreno to tears, and the "feminine" sound that awaits on "*The White Pony*"...enjoy.

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MTV: WHAT SHOULD FANS EXPECT THIS TIME AROUND?

Chino: It's a Deftones record. It's got a little bit of everything. It's heavy, but it's not just all aggro and angry and angst music. It's got a lot of... girl in it. It's kind of sexy, I think.

IS THIS A KINDER, GENTLER, DEFTONES SOUND COMING OUT?

Chino: Probably, yeah. I won't lie. There's a lot more mellow vibe on this record. And it probably has a lot to do with the fact as you get older, you stop being pissed off at the world. You kind of just mellow out a little bit. I think it's a good thing, though. It's not like we didn't change up or anything. We're still us.

Frank: It's definitely bigger, bolder, better.

IS THAT SOMETHING YOU ALL AGREED ON?

Chino: You know, it was nothing that we thought about. [We] just kind of made the record, and those were the songs that came out. If anything, toward the end, we kind of started saying, "We should write some heavy music, because we don't want to alienate everybody." We got some heavy stuff on there, but it's not the same typical heavy stuff. It's not heavy in that same context where it's always mashing out at you. It more grabs you and brings you in instead of trying to push everyone away.

IN THE PAST, YOU'VE MENTIONED BANDS LIKE CURE AND MORRISSEY AS BEING INFLUENCES. IS THAT THE SAME OR ARE YOU NOW DRAWING ON DIFFERENT INFLUENCES?



Chino: Everyone has their own influences. Like this record, lyrically, I got a lot of ideas from Nick Cave, where I take a lot of his nastiness and a lot of his storytelling type of thing. It's all scenarios. It's almost like watching an independent film where it's a lot of dialogue and scenarios, and it's not straightforward, like, "This is what the song is about. I'm gonna sing about it." It's got a lot of storytelling and characters and dialogue. It's more like comparing an independent film to a blockbuster film.

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You don't know what's coming up next.

You have to get into it. It's one of the records where it's fun to buy it and open it and read along with what's going on instead of just hearing one song at a time and humming it and walking down the street. There's a lot of depth to it, I think.

PEOPLE ALWAYS SEEM STRUCK BY FACT THAT YOU GUYS SEEM TO HAVE A SOLID FRIENDSHIP. DOES THAT HELP WHEN YOU'RE RECORDING A RECORD?

Chino: It definitely helped on this record, because there were times when we were about to go at it... a lot of tension, making this record. Just a lot of pressure. People expect that this is going to be our record, that this is going to take us to where we need to go, and that pressure alone is enough to get us all to push and pull at each other. But the fact that we are close, we can all just kind of know that there is something we've got to do. We've got to do all this to get through it. And once it's all done, we will just be able to relax and take a deep breath.

Abe: It's definitely been a different...

Frank: A hard record.

Chino: The hardest record that I've ever made.

Chi: I think we're all really excited, and everyone wanted to put all this stuff into it. And then it's really hard, because we've known each other for so long that we're really quick to say, "Aw, that sucks." So you're kind of walking on eggshells, but you're really not, because you've known these guys for so long. Everyone wanted to do their thing.

Chino: We're pretty mean to each other. I mean, everybody's cool, but if somebody does something that's anywhere near cheesy to another person, we'll be like, "That sucks." Just mean to each other. It's not good, but...

Frank: We're brothers, basically.

Chino: We push buttons sometimes.

Frank: Sometimes to get a better reaction.

Chino: I cry at least twice during the making of a record, every time I get picked on by somebody who interrogates me and picks on me.

WHY HAS THE ALBUM TAKEN SO LONG?

Chi: Quality, not quantity, I suppose. This style of music is really big right now, and it'd be so predictable to want to jump right in and take advantage of the kind of success this music is having now. We would rather stick to what we have been doing for the past ten, eleven years... do something that we feel comfortable with, have the faith in our fans. That's what they're going to expect from us, and they're going to appreciate that.



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YOU TOOK SOMETHING LIKE TWO MONTHS OFF FROM RECORDING TO TOUR WITH OZZFEST THIS SUMMER...

Chino: Actually, we hadn't started recording yet, but we had started writing and then we went out. I think it did screw us up a little bit, but oh well.

HOW DID THAT DECISION COME ABOUT?

Chi: Rent.

Chino: Kizz-nash!

Chi: Kids. We keep having kids. Everyone in the band is having kids.

Abe: Plus, we're a touring band. We love to tour. It was a chance to have one final bang on this album cycle and have it be done and complete so we could come and start this.

Chino: One good thing that maybe came out of it was, I listened to songs we wrote before we went on the Ozzfest, and they're different than the songs when we came back. I think we wrote a lot more mellow stuff when we came back, and before we left for the Ozzfest, we were making more heavy stuff. And when we came back, everything started getting more feminine... I think maybe I got Satan-ed out on the tour or something like that.

SO FAR, YOU GUYS ARE PROUD OF THE NEW RECORD?

Chino: I'm very proud. It's, like, a record I can put on in my headphones and go to

sleep to, and those are my favorite records.

Any record you can go to sleep listening to is a dope record, so I like it a lot. Like I said, it's different from our other records, so it'll be interesting to hear what people say about it.

But I think it's good, and usually at the end of anything we've done, as long as we feel it's good, then people end up liking it.

A LOT OF PEOPLE THINK THAT THIS ALBUM WILL "TAKE YOU TO THE NEXT LEVEL." ANY COMMENTS ON THAT?

Chino: I'm numb to that. I don't even think about that. It's not important to me really, at all. I mean, maybe in a financial state of mind it would be. I eat. As you can tell, I eat, and I'm not hungry, and I have a car and a house and I'm not hurting to try to get myself into more people's faces. If we get more fans and more people want to hear our music that's nice. But I don't have this goal to just, like, bust out and show everybody who I am,

because I'm just me, and I like what I do, and I think everybody else probably feels the same way.

YOU GUYS WERE ONE OF THE FIRST BANDS TO TAKE LIMP BIZKIT OUT BACK IN THE SPRING OF 1998, AND SINCE THEN, THEY'VE TAKEN AN INTERESTING PATH. ANY THOUGHTS ON THAT?

DO YOU GUYS STILL SEE EACH OTHER?

Chino: I talked to Fred [Durst] the other day, and he's probably just as scared as I am. He said he's going in to make his new record, and he has to make a song that's better than "Nookie", otherwise nobody's gonna care, and that's a lot of pressure right there. You can never really kick back on the sofa and put your feet on the table and think everything is going to be good for you, because he's even scared. You can't get comfortable. You just have to do what is gonna make you happy and work and work at it. You can't relax.



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